PROPER HYDRATION

The high desert is an environment which is subject to severe heat and lack of humidity during the summer months. **Functioning in this environment requires certain procedures be followed in order to prevent dehydration and heatstroke.**

Proper hydration cannot be accomplished by reacting to the body when it is thirsty. **Hydration must be done in advance of exposure to heat and dryness.** The following is a protocol to assure proper hydration and electrolyte balance which is essential for peak performance in a hot, arid environment.

Begin the night before by drinking water regularly during the course of the evening. An eight to ten ounce glass every half hour is adequate. A good measure is to check your urine to monitor that the color remains clear.

Prior to reporting to the range, drink a quart of water. If you have it available, half strength Gatorade (half water half Gatorade) is better than just water. Eat a banana with your breakfast and refrain from over consuming caffeine. Alcohol the night before and in the evenings after the course will act to dehydrate you, so it is not advised.

During the course of the day, drink water regularly between shooting relays and stay in the shade as much as possible. **If you begin to feel weak or dizzy, or begin to get confused and notice your coordination disappearing, this is the beginning of an adverse reaction to dehydration and possibly heatstroke. Immediately seek shade and notify an instructor.**

We give you this information in advance knowing that if you follow it you are much less likely to have any problems with the heat. Do not take the attitude that since you are accustomed to the heat you need not follow the strict protocol outlined above. Those who have come before you can testify to dropping (literally) before the end of the course because they did not follow these simple but effective procedures.

**Note:** Cardiovascular conditions, kidney dysfunction, and digestive disorders make it more difficult for your body to maintain proper temperature, hydration, and electrolyte balance. Certain prescription drugs such as antibiotics, Beta Blockers, and blood pressure medications can also cause your body to have less tolerance to heat. If you have these conditions or are taking these prescription drugs, you require even closer monitoring to prevent dehydration and heatstroke.